

Standards and Guidelines for Writing a One-Plan for Multiple-Use Forest Management on Private Lands in Idaho

Plans developed through use of this guide should meet the standards of each; Forest Management Plans (for NRCS conservation activities), Tree Farm Plans (for American Tree Farm System), and Forest Stewardship Plans (for Idaho's Forest Stewardship Program).

An electronic version of all plan contents must be submitted to the administrator of each program for which the landowner wishes to participate.

A. Property Ownership, Property Description and Landowner Objectives

1. Property ownership is provided on the plan cover and includes; plan title, landowner's name and contact information, plan author and contact information, date the original plan was written. When plans are updated or amended include changes to author (if applicable) and date of amendment.

2. Property description includes; total acreage covered by the plan, total ownership acreage, estimated forested acres, whether landowner is a resident of the property or absentee landowner, legal property description (section/township/range), may include GPS coordinates (formatted to decimal degree), description of the general topography, the name of the watershed in which the property is located, the name and phone number of the fire district in which the property is located and the estimated response time to the property.

3. Property history is included in the plan as a general overview based on information that was provided by the landowner, personal knowledge, property records, or evidence of silvicultural activities (e.g. stumps, skid trails, etc.). This section of the plan may include length of current ownership and past management activities.

4. Landowner goals and specific objectives must be clearly stated. Encourage landowners to make a list of their goals (broad vision of what they want to achieve on their land) and objectives (means or actions to achieve the goals), which reflect their expectations, values, and potential of their property.

B. Property Maps

1. All maps will include a title, directional arrow, scale, and legend. The scale should be sufficient to easily identify all features included on the map.

2. Property map will include the property boundary, delineated management units, major roads, water features, and structures. The location of any other special sites or resource elements may be included on this map. The property map may be overlaid on an aerial photo or no background. Choose the option that best displays the property details.

3. Topographic map will clearly display contour lines and include the property boundary, delineated management units, major roads, water features, and structures.

4. Soils map will be projected over an aerial photo, delineate and label the

location of major soil types on the property, and include the property boundary and delineated management units. NRCS has developed a web-based map-making tool, <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>.

C. Natural Resource Elements for Forest Stewardship Plans:

1. Special Sites and Social Considerations

a) Special Sites (archeological, cultural, historic, and conservation concerns)

(1) Describe any archeologically, culturally, historically, geologically, biologically, or ecologically valuable sites or high conservation value forest that should be recognized and protected. Sites may include any features that have significant personal importance to the landowner.

(2) State landowner's objectives for protecting or restoring the special sites.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for protection or restoration of these sites. Examples of recommendations include erecting signs or fences and methods to ensure management activities do not impact the site.

b) Aesthetics (adjacent stand or ownership concerns)

(1) Describe how management may affect the visual structure of the forest and how do those actions impact your neighbors. Consider aesthetic quality, wildfire concerns, privacy, noxious weeds, wildlife movement and habitat. Describe the desired condition that would maintain or enhance the aesthetic qualities.

(2) State landowner's objectives for maintaining or enhancing aesthetic qualities.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for improvement or enhancement of their aesthetic related interests. Examples of recommendations include strategies to mitigate impacts to neighboring view sheds, reduce transport of noxious weeds, or maintenance of wildlife corridors.

c) Recreation

(1) Describe present recreational uses or opportunities for recreation and relate to the landowner objectives. Descriptions may include location of trail systems, whether the property is open to the public, or information about posting property.

(2) State landowner's objectives for maintaining or increasing the recreational opportunities on the property.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives to improve or maintain the recreational qualities of the property. Examples of recommendations include strategies for trail building, day lighting ski trails, developing bird watching posts, or any other activity of interest.

2. Soil, Water and Air Protection

a) Soil

(1) Describe the existing general conditions and identify land and soil types (or refer to soils map). Include slopes, aspects, and Idaho Forest Practices Act (FPA) limitations, such as steep slopes and unstable conditions, and erosion control plans to the description.

(2) State landowner's objectives for maintaining or improving soil resources.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives to improve or maintain the soil and reference Best Management Practices, where appropriate. Examples of recommendations include suggest strategies for wood debris retention, nutrient cycling, vehicle travel, or mitigate soil compaction, flood runoff, and livestock issues.

b) Roads and Access

(1) Describe the current condition of roads and trails and identify areas for improvement or maintenance. Describe the type of access allowable on the road, such as if a bridge is passable by an ATV, car, or logging truck. Reference to a map may be helpful as part of the description.

(2) State landowner's objectives for improving or developing or closing roads.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives related to their road and trail systems and improve or maintain soil quality. Recommendations should address timing for general maintenance, strategies to reduce erosion, road surface condition, and road runoff, suggest locations for drain-dips, culverts, and stream crossings. Examples of recommendations include limiting road use during certain times of the year and methods to mitigate invasive weed movement. Recommendations for weed control should follow integrated pest management strategies.

c) Water

(1) Describe the existing water features on the property, both natural and man-made and include riparian areas or riparian and wildlife habitat. Descriptions should include identification of streams according to Forest Practices Act (FPA) classification and beneficial uses (e.g. domestic, fisheries, agriculture, or recreation).

(2) State landowner's objectives for maintaining or improving the quality of their water resources.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for maintaining or improving the quality of their water resources. Examples of recommendations include address strategies to remain in compliance with FPA rules during all forest activities, Streamside Protection Zones (SPZ), road crossings, and tree-retention requirements.

d) Wetlands

(1) Describe the characteristics of any known wetlands, as previously defined by the Army Corp of Engineers or other authority, and display on at least one, if not all of the property maps. The US Fish and Wildlife service National Wetland Inventory,

<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>, is a mapping tool to locate wetland and other water features.

(2) State landowner's objectives for protecting or restoring wetlands and related habitat.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for protecting or restoring wetlands and related habitat. Examples of recommendations include working with Idaho Fish and Game to facilitate protection and enhancement of the wetlands or including supplementary documents such as this leaflet on wetlands,

fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/wildlife/nongame/leafletWetlands.pdf.

e) Carbon Cycle (optional)

(1) Describe the carbon cycle in general terms. Describe the current forest condition as it relates to carbon sequestration.

(2) State landowner's objectives or interest in pursuing credits in the carbon market.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for pursuing credits in the carbon market and provide information on State of California carbon market (or other emerging markets). Educational material may be provided to the landowner that describes how forest practices and natural occurrences (e.g. insects, disease, fire, etc.) may alter the natural cycle. Possible websites for additional information on carbon cycling and markets:

<http://www.treefarmssystem.org/ecosystems services/>;

<http://www.fs.fed.us/ecosystems services/carbon.shtml>;

<http://www.idahoforests.org/img/pdf/DovetailManagingForestCarbon1011.pdf>

<http://www.fs.fed.us/ccrc/topics/forests-carbon/>

<http://www.idahoforests.org/carbonforests.htm>

3. Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity

a) Fish and Wildlife

(1) Describe the current habitat conditions that are suitable for specific wildlife or fish (percent cover and plant species) and list observed or known fish and wildlife of significance (species and abundance). Description can be general and based on landowner observations or those made during a site visit.

(2) State landowner's objectives to protect, enhance, or restore fish and wildlife habitat.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner's objectives for protection, enhancement, or restoration of fish and wildlife habitat. Examples of recommendations include snag retention, erect nest boxes, game and predator management, planting fallow fields as food plots, or other methods to create or improve habitat species.

b) Threatened and Endangered Species

(1) Describe the presence of threatened or endangered species (plant or animal) observed by the landowner or during a site visit. If a threatened or endangered species is present, provide species name, extent of plants or number of animals observed and conditions of the habitat. Species lists can be found on the US Fish and Wildlife sponsored site, http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/pub/stateListingAndOccurrenceIndividual.jsp?state=ID and the Idaho Fish and Game website for the Idaho Natural Heritage Program, which houses NatureServe, <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/wildlife/nongame/?getPage=25>.

(2) State landowner's objectives to protect the species and enhance the habitat to support the threatened or endangered species.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner's objectives for protection and enhancement of the species habitat. The landowner or plan prepare should contact Idaho Fish and Game for detailed recommendations related to a specific species of concern.

(4) If no species are evident and landowner is interested in attracting species to property, recommendations may include asking for assistance from Idaho Fish and Game to identify potential habitat for restoration or modification for a particular species.

c) Biodiversity

(1) Describe the current cover types (or habitat types) on the property, high conservation value forest (unique ecological areas), or the general biodiversity condition. When possible, include estimates on the abundance and diversity of flora and fauna. Areas of special interest should be identified on a map.

(2) State landowner's objectives to maintain or increase biodiversity on the property.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner's objectives for maintaining or increasing biodiversity on the property. Examples of recommendations include integrated pest management methods to manage noxious weeds, retaining large trees, or planting seral species after harvest.

4. Forest Health and Fire

a) Forest Health

(1) Describe current forest condition related to forest health, include observed signs and symptoms of insects or diseases, overstocked stands, and other biotic or abiotic factors that are creating unhealthy forest conditions. Be sure to inform landowners of the presence of invasive species (noxious weeds) on their property or neighboring property.

(2) State landowner's objectives to maintain or improve forest health and vigor.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for maintaining or improving the health of the forest. A standard recommendation is to inspect the forest for damaging agents, annually,

and additional inspections after natural disasters. Recommendations may include planting and preference for tree species that are appropriate for the sites and matching seed source and seedling with the elevation to be planted (possibly as it relates to climate change). Examples of recommendations include specifications and timing for thinning and pruning and should include information on integrated pest management strategies, where applicable.

(4) Describe forest damage agents in terms of their relative risk to the forest and provide a prioritization for implementing control or treatments and a timeline for recommended treatments. If noxious weeds are present, or an eminent threat, inform the landowner in which Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) the property lies. A map of CWMA and information can be found at

<http://www.agri.state.id.us/Categories/PlantsInsects/NoxiousWeeds/cwmas.php>

b) Wildfire Hazard Reduction and Fire Resilient Forests

(1) Describe current forest conditions (or fuel loads) that are at high risk for carrying intense fires or crown fires. Identify tree species by their dependence or adaptation to fires and any neighboring forests that are a high risk for wildfire.

(2) State landowner's objectives to reduce the risk of wildfire and create a fire adapted forest.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner's objectives for reducing the risk of wildfire and creating a fire adapted forest. Examples of recommendations include creation and use of firebreaks and fuel breaks (possibly identify on a map), and silvicultural treatments such as prescribed burns, thinning, and pruning to mitigate the intensity of wildfire.

c) Home Firewise and Fire Adapted Communities

(1) Describe characteristics of the home and surrounding landscape that may increase or mitigate the risk of losing the home in the event of a wildfire. Include information about the fire district in which the property is located (or nearest fire department), response times, and phone numbers.

(2) State landowner's objectives to reduce the risk of wildfire to their home and surrounding property.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner objectives for reducing the risk of wildfire to their home and surrounding property. Recommendations should use the wealth of information provided by the Firewise Safety Program, www.idahofirewise.org. Examples of recommendations promoted by Firewise are to establish defensible space near home sites and structures including firescaping and fuels treatments.

(3) Provide information about Fire Adapted Communities, <http://www.fireadapted.org/> and inform the landowner about their County Wildfire Protection Plan.

5. Range and Agroforestry (if applicable)

a) Range

(1) Describe the presence of range or forested range in terms of its extent and general conditions, which may include species of grasses and forbs, brush, and animal types. Locate range areas on one or all maps.

(2) State landowner's objectives to maintain or improve rangeland.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner's objectives for maintaining or improving the rangeland. Recommend using NRCS assistance to develop a plan specifically addressing range management. Examples of recommendations include sustainable grazing guidelines, pastures and animal rotation, water sources, salt block placement, management of native and non-native weeds.

b) Agroforestry

(1) Describe any agroforestry activities related to crops and trees considered or identify areas of the property where agroforestry activities may occur. Agroforestry includes alley cropping, forest farming, riparian forest buffers, silvopasture, windbreaks, and other special applications. Specific information about agroforestry can be found at <http://nac.unl.edu/>.

(2) State landowner's objectives to maintain or improve agroforestry production.

(3) Recommendations will consider landowner's objectives for maintaining or improving agroforestry production. An example recommendation is to examine local markets for interest in non-timber forest products.

6. Forest Management Unit Areas

Delineate management unit areas on appropriate map or maps and provide specific information for each unit, using points A through C (listed below) as a guide.

When similar silvicultural recommendations are made for multiple management units it is not necessary to repeat the same details, instead refer the reader to where the activity was described in detail.

Plans authored by IDL staff should include information about the services of consulting forester for conducting a timber cruise (inventory) to establish a basis for tax purposes or in preparation for a timber sale.

Provide the identifying number (or letter) of the management unit and number of acres before describing each management unit.

a) Management Unit Description

(1) Describe the existing forest condition. Descriptions must include tree species composition, average and range of size class

(seedling, sapling, pole, sawtimber) or DBH, average tree height in each size class, stocking (basal area, trees per acre, or a general description as understocked, adequate, overstocked), site-index (if site-index curves are available; otherwise, dominant height and age at breast height), average annual growth (rings/inch and/or leader height), and stand age (or age range for uneven aged stands). Information may be provided in paragraph or table format. It may be easier for the landowner to evaluate the information for multiple management units if presented in a table.

(2) When a previously described resource element is also a major component of the management unit being described, provide specific information about the current condition and recommended practices within that management unit. The following is recommended to reduce redundancy within the plan, for landowners with forests over 20 acres, general information should be provided in each resource category and more specific descriptions written for each management unit. For landowners with forests of 20 acres or less, enough detail should be provided in each of the previously described resource categories that reference can be made to those descriptions or maps that describe the condition.

(3) All information in this section should be detailed enough to make sound management decisions.

b) State the landowner's objectives to improve, harvest, or regenerate the existing forest.

c) Recommendations will consider the landowner's objectives to improve, harvest, or regenerate the existing forest. Recommendations must describe the desired condition of the management unit after applying the treatment or practice and provide guidance on how to achieve the desired condition. When using forestry terms provide the reader a definition or description of the term.

Information to provide for silvicultural recommendations.

(1) Harvesting: Describe and recommend a type of harvest (Even-aged: clearcut, seed tree, shelterwood, commercial and pre-commercial thinning, etc. Uneven-aged: group select, single-tree select, overstory removal, understory removal, etc.) based on existing and the desired future stand conditions. Also, describe scenarios where and when sanitation/salvage removal should be considered.

Recommend and describe the harvest method (ground, skyline) based on soil conditions, slope, time of year, type of harvest.

Provide targets for stocking density, specify species to harvest (or retain) and size class.

(2) Slash management: Describe the method that best meets

landowner objectives and complies with the Forest Practices Act (FPA).

(3) Notifications: Inform about the need for relevant notifications and compliance related to Fire Hazard Management Notification of Forest Practices, Supplemental Notification for the Stream Channel Alteration Permit, and others as needed.

(4) Stream Protection Zone (SPZ): When a stream or other water feature is within a treated area delineate the SPZ on a map or describe the zone in relation to the water feature and forest practice. Provide information about marking the SPZ and the appropriate laws that must be followed.

(5) Monitoring: Recommend on-site evaluation of harvest operations and all forest practices before, during, and after the practice to ensure forest management goals are met. Suggest at least annual inspections for forest health related concerns.

(6) Post harvest practices: Recommendations should consider the type of harvest or treatment completed, existing or new roads, and other soil and water issues. Examples of recommendations include burning landings, piles, or broadcast, seeding roads and landings, and weed treatments along roadsides.

(7) Reforestation or afforestation: Recommend artificial, natural, or a combination of both for regeneration. Describe regeneration methods and pros and cons of each method. Provide specific details of the preferred species (resistant or improved stock), site preparation, spacing, weed management, timing, etc.

(8) Timber stand improvement and other silvicultural treatments: Examples of recommended practices included, pre-commercial thinning, commercial thinning, pruning, etc. Provide details, such as preferred species, size class, desired density, when to apply treatment, how to prune, etc.

(9) Integrated pest management (IPM): Recommendations to control forest pests (insects, disease, or weeds) should incorporate an integrated pest management approach. Provide landowners a general explanation of IPM and the tools involved with setting thresholds, monitoring, cultural practices, mechanical control, biological control, genetic engineering, and chemical control.

(10) Other information as needed

E. Management Activity Schedule and Tracking

Provide a schedule or prioritized list of the activities recommended in the plan. Use the table provided in the *One-Plan for Multiple-Use Forest Management on Private Lands in Idaho* (Appendix C) or create a table with the following as column headings:

1. Treatment date (Season/Year): provide a specific year or range of years
2. Treatment/Practice: provide a short description of activity to be accomplished
3. NRCS practice code: provide when an NRCS Practice Code is applicable and potential interest in financial assistance for the activity. For a list of NRCS practices and descriptions (including codes), visit: <http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov> .
4. MU#: management unit number where recommended activity is located
5. Acres or feet to treat
6. Applied practice cost and date: for the landowner to record information